

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of

MAERTENS, et.al

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Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, DC 20231

Siri

AMENDMENT

Responsive to the Official Action dated February 13, 2002, entry and consideration of the following amendments and remarks are requested.

IN THE CLAIMS

Amend the claims as follows.

Cancel claims 1-35, without prejudice.

Add the following claims:

--36. (new) An immunoassay kit comprising a solid phase carrying, as antigen,

an HCV NS3 protein which has been reduced by a reducing agent.

37. (new) An immunoassay kit comprising a solid phase carrying as antigen an

HCV NS3 protein, which has been produced by adding a reducing agent in at least one of the following steps:

(i) coating of said solid phase with said antigen;

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